

## Rationale for PRACTICE Portfolio #1

**Title:** *The Worst Time of My Life*

**Grade:** 12

**Year released:** 2007

**Reflective Piece:** The Last Few Years

1 **Content** (2, 1, 1)

Although the writing attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose by discussing literacy, the limited idea development and lack of details contribute to a limited awareness of the audience.

1 **Structure** (1, 1, 2)

The writing attempts complex sentences but lacks control. The lack of an introduction and transitions between paragraphs contributes to ineffective organization. Organization within paragraphs is also limited.

2 **Conventions** (2, 2, 2)

Though the writing demonstrates some errors in grammar and usage, imprecise word choice, and errors in correctness, these problems do not interfere with communication (e.g., "after reviewing some of my pieces from my freshman year I knew I had because there where so many things that needed to be taken out" and "I have came a long way").

### **Instructional Implications:**

Lessons that may derive from the use of this sample include

- the demonstration of how the use of details does not necessarily constitute idea development.
- the demonstration of the need for careful proofreading rather than a seeming over-reliance on a "spell-check" or other computer application to "fix" the writing.

## **Portfolio Title: The Worst Time of My Life**

### **Personal OR Literary Piece Title: The Worst Time of My Life**

#### 2 **Content** (2, 2, 1)

The writing attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose by focusing on a single incident (an embarrassing moment). There is an attempt to communicate with an audience at the conclusion of the piece ("I hope it never happens to you."). The writer offers weak support and few details.

#### 2 **Structure** (2, 2, 2)

The writing demonstrates logical, chronological organization, but there are lapses in coherence (e.g., between first and second paragraphs) and some transitional elements (e.g., "after I found. . ."). The writing attempts complex sentences but lacks control of sentence structure.

#### 2 **Conventions** (2, 2, 2)

There are some errors that interfere with communication (e.g., "my friend and me"). The writer shows evidence of simplistic language (e.g., "I stood there"). Although there are some correctness errors (e.g., "piers"), they do not interfere with communication.

### **Instructional Implications:**

Lessons that may derive from the use of this sample include

- the demonstration of the need for a strong controlling idea in an introduction. Teachers may ask students how this writer could have more effectively introduced the focus of this piece.
- the demonstration of the need for eliminating extra words. Teachers may take sample sentences from this piece to demonstrate how eliminating excess words strengthens writing.

## **Portfolio Title: The Worst Time of My Life**

**Transactive Piece Title:** Dear Senator McConnell

### 1 **Content** (1, 1, 1)

The purpose of this piece is general and topic-driven without a clear focus. Although the writing exhibits some characteristics of the genre (e.g., letter form), the lack of focus contributes to the limited awareness of audience's needs.

### 1 **Structure** (1, 1, 2)

While the writer attempts to use white space as a transition, the limited use of transitional elements contributes to ineffective organization of this piece. The writing attempts complex sentence structures, but lacks control (e.g., "Myself I support the pan and I hope it follows through."; "The best way we can decide is let the people voice their opinion on the matter by voting.")

### 2 **Conventions** (2, 2, 2)

Although there are some errors in grammar/usage (e.g., "Myself I. . ."), they do not interfere with communication. The writing demonstrates simplistic word choice (e.g., "not doing us any good."), correctness errors (Dear, Senator McConnell), but these errors do not interfere with communication.

## **Instructional Implications:**

Lessons that may derive from the use of this sample include

- the demonstration of the need for stronger awareness of audience's needs. Teachers may ask students to consider more appropriate ways the writer could have met the audience's (Senator McConnell's or another appropriate audience's) needs in the writing. The discussion could include parts of the writing that meet audience's expectations/needs and those that do not.
- the demonstration of the need for authentic writing tasks, so that the writing does not become so fact-based and topic-driven that it demonstrates little purpose.

## **Portfolio Title: The Worst Time of My Life**

**Transactional Piece Title:** Dimmesdale, The Victim of Love  
(with Analytical or Technical Focus)

1 Content (1, 1, 1)

Though the title and introduction establish a general analytical purpose (how keeping a love secret can cause bad times), the writing provides few details to support the thesis. This weak support does not meet the needs of the audience. The writing is plot-driven rather than analytical in nature and demonstrates limited idea development.

1 Structure (1, 1, 2)

With the integration of quoted material, the writing includes some complex sentence structure, but the attempts are not always successful. Organization is based on the plot rather than an analysis of what the writer understands about the plot. The writing demonstrates some ineffective transitional elements (e.g., "While Hester stood on a scaffold she noticed a familiar face").

1 Conventions (1, 2, 1)

The writing indicates a lack of control in grammar and correctness (e.g., random capitalization, frequent punctuation errors) and simplistic word choice (e.g., "Chillingworth first starts out. . ."). The shift between past and present tense confuses the reader. There is an attempt to document the source material within the text, though the documentation follows no particular style.

### **Instructional Implications:**

Lessons that may derive from the use of this sample include

- the need for analysis over plot description in literary analysis.
- the need for use of literary present tense in literary analysis.
- the need for integration of text support (all references to text on first page come from page 70). Teachers may use this sample to discuss classroom requirements of particular styles of documentation.